



NEWS RELEASE

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WEWAHITCHKA RECEIVES \$2.3 MILLION FOR WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM IN RED BULL AND RED BULL ISLAND

WEWAHITCHKA, FL, November 10, 2004 — Located along the Chipola River in northwest Florida, the community of Wewahitchka is making significant strides in protecting the environment in the Apalachicola River Basin by eliminating potentially harmful septic tanks. Wastewater from Red Bull and Red Bull Island will be collected and pumped to the Wewahitchka Wastewater Treatment Facility for treatment and disposal. Currently, the wastewater from this area is held on site in septic tanks, treated and eventually leaches into the ground, a potential source of pollution to the spring-fed Chipola River, the Apalachicola River's largest tributary, draining one-half of the Apalachicola River basin.

The City of Wewahitchka received \$2,351,600 in combined loan (\$1,323,980) and grant (\$1,027,620) funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development for construction of a low pressure and gravity wastewater collection system in the areas of Red Bull and Red Bull Island. USDA Rural Development representatives met with Wewahitchka city leaders today for a ceremonial check signing event. "The leaders and residents of Wewahitchka are to be applauded for taking their community forward," said Rural Development State Director Charles W. Clemons, Sr. "Investing in basic community infrastructure supports President Bush's vision for a strong and vibrant America. For the quality of life in rural America to remain strong and rural economies to prosper, it is essential that our communities safeguard the health and safety of residents and the viability of the environment."

The \$2.3 million waste collection system includes construction of approximately 18,000 linear feet of 8" collection lines, 11,000 linear feet of force main and three new lift stations. Immediately, upon completion of the project, the system will serve 833 users, and could serve as many as 300 future customers in the areas of Red Bull and Red Bull Island.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers financial and technical assistance through three agencies: Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service and Rural Utilities Service. Further information on USDA Rural Development can be obtained by contacting any USDA Service Center or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/fl>

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